NARRA

ANDREW JACKSON,

OF KENTUCKY;

CONTAINING AN ACCOUNT OF HIS BIRTH, AND TWENTY-SIX YEARS OF HIS LIFE WHILE A SLAVE; HIS ESCAPE; AND FOUR YEARS OF FREEDOM, TOGETHER WITH ANECDOTES RELATING TO SLAVERY, ETC.

NARRATED BY HIMSELF;

WRITTEN BY A FRIEND.

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PREFACE.

In presenting the following brief narrative to the public, I do not expect to startle them with a long history of tortures, starvation, and maiming, as many less fortunate ones of my race might do. It was not my unhappy lot ever to be very severely whipped—nor were that necessary to make me impatient to be free. If there is a peculiarity in my case, it is the fact that, although not a slave *even under the laws of slavery*, yet I was held and treated as a slave, and to the day of my death, should have remained thus,—subject to its changes and hardships, had not a kind Providence favored my efforts to gain my liberty by flight.

The fact that my mother died a free woman, was of no advantage to me so long as I was claimed as the property of the heirs of her master. They had power and wealth—friends and influence. I had neither, who could be of any service to me. To complain, was only to secure to me ridicule and abuse. Nor was I alone in my sufferings. There are many slaves at the south, who if they had friends and power to enforce the law, would be set at liberty on the same grounds that I should have been liberated and clothed with the rights of a freeman.

I presume my sense of the wrong done to me in keeping me as a slave, was more keen from my constant reflection that I was *legally* entitled to freedom, than it otherwise would have been; yet I can see no difference in the injustice of holding me as a slave, and holding those who were not placed in the same circumstances. If the "Declaration of Independence," as it is called, which states that "all men are endowed by their Creator with the inalienable right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness," is correct, there is not a slave in the world who would not be justified in fighting his way to freedom, more desperately than I have done. And when I have attended the 4th of July celebrations at the north, since I came here, I have felt a spirit rising up within me that I could with difficulty repress, when I have thought of the miserable farce that such celebrations present. To hear men quote the language of Patrick

or give me death!" and to hear them liberty," and of this "free and happy nking of the chains of 3,000,000 of ringing in their ears, is enough to make *hese chains*, feel like calling fire from heav- such mockery of the sacred Genius of Liberty. it be strange, if yet the God of Justice should cease His forbearance to such a nation, and punish her as He did ancient Egypt for oppressing His free children.

It is impossible for me, on paper, to describe the feelings of a slave. The love of liberty is as deep in their breasts as in other men's. They are as sensitive under wrongs and sufferings, notwithstanding their apparent submission. And I doubt not their white masters, under an Algerine oppression, would be as submissive as they are. When men of any color find they must submit to wrong, and that there is no escape, the color of the skin does not create any difference.

I hope those who shall read this narrative, and learn what a fellow being was willing to undergo to obtain his liberty, will feel a deeper interest in the liberation of the millions less fortunate still groaning in Slavery, and by the spirit of the Golden Rule, laid down in Divine Truth, be moved to do as *they* would have others do for them were they in the place of the slaves.

ANDREW JACKSON.

opportunity should offer, and I could see my way clear, to attempt a shorter and more certain route to freedom than to await the fulfilment of a Slaveholder's promise; for in relation to the emancipation of a slave, their promises are always forgotten before they get cold." And, "if I could have had any confidence in such promises, it would have inspired me with energy to do almost any amount of labor, for I never desired any thing more ardently, nor was willing to make so great a sacrifice for any thing else as my liberty." And I here beg leave to say, that although I have often heard northern people state that the slaves did "not want their freedom," yet I never saw one who would not endure twice what I passed through, and more, if they could be sure of liberty at the last. It is the theme of almost every meeting among them, and one of the most happy events whenever one escapes. And it is a very rare thing that one slave ever becomes informer against his brother who intends to take the long walk. When one is ready to start, those who remain will often help him in every way in their power.

CHAPTER II.

"After firmly resolving to runaway from my master," the next thing was to learn where to go, and how to get away. I heard a great many things about the Northern States, and some things not at all favorable to my welfare, even if I should succeed in making my escape. I was told that the "free niggers" were often half starved, and not respected any more, if as much, as they were in the Slave States. But I made up my mind that if I could learn the way, I would try it. An opportunity occurred for me to obtain the information I needed from a gentleman who had been north, and described the route through Kentucky, Ohio, Illinois, &c. Then the thing was to get started—to get away from the neighborhood without detection. I resolved to make the attempt.

On Saturday night, early in August, I gathered my clothes

together, and after selecting the *best*, which were not very good, I started off in the direction of a piece of woods, and there tore up those I desired least, and threw them down, besmeared with blood which I obtained to give them the appearance of having been torn from me by a wild beast, in order that I might prevent any one from pursuing me until I could escape beyond their reach.

The Clerk's Office being some six miles distant, I thought I would go there on my way, too, and get a certificate of my freedom, under pretence of trying to obtain my liberty by process of law. The Clerk replied to my request only by cursing me, and told me to go back and be content to live with my master. I did not feel disposed to remain long, so I started off, telling him I would go back—but I meant I would go back to the woods.

The first place I directed my steps to, was Shakertown. The way I managed to get along here without creating suspicion, was to represent that I was a "turnpiker," and going to a job north of that vicinity. Slaves are frequently employed at this business, some distance from home. This pretence worked well for a while, until I had passed beyond the vicinity of it and had lost my way, and was compelled to inquire the road, when I was frequently interrupted with questions. The first I have any recollection of, was from a gentleman on horseback, alone, as follows:

"Where do you belong, nigger?" said he.

"I am a turnpiker, going to Elkton," I replied.

"Whose boy are you," said he.

Assuming all the courage I could, I told him it was not his business; but he then began to suspect, and accused me of being a runaway. I smiled, and took out some old papers and pretended to look for my pass. As he saw me looking for it, he concluded all was right, and rode on, being in haste. It often appears to me that the slaveholders and southerners generally, are much more regardful of their neighbors' property and interests than the people of the north. I can not account for it on any other supposition than the very peculiar *character of the*

property. If slaves were like money, simply transferable by the will of the owner, I presume it would be quite different. But inasmuch as it often takes *legs* and *runs away*, it becomes a matter of mutual interest for each to protect his neighbor's "*rights*," in order to render his own more secure.

I very soon came across another man who made the enquiry, "Whose boy are you?" Upon refusing to tell him, I was again accused, and having no pass to show him from my master, I soon resolved to *pass away* from him; and as I saw he was lame and could not follow me, nor get very soon to a house to give the alarm, I started off for the woods, and went on in a direction that soon brought me within sight of the road I wished to take, where I walked until near night, when I again emerged into the road, and kept it until in the morning, and went into the woods, where after finding a safe and suitable place, I lay down in a thicket for sleep, weary and hungry—for I dared not to apply any where for food.

After sleeping until afternoon, I awoke and resumed my journey through the woods and fields until towards night, subsisting upon raw potatoes and wheat which I picked and shelled out in my hands. The next day, fearing I should lose my way, I ventured to take the road. I had traveled but a short distance before I came to a house, where I saw two men standing. As I came up they hailed me with the usual salutation, "Where you going, nigger?" "Whose boy are you?" I made them no answer, but walked on at a rapid rate, with my faithful young hickory—my only weapon of defense. Supposing me to be a "runaway," as men generally do in such cases, they armed themselves with guns and dogs and gave chase, and I followed their example, directing my way several hundred yards ahead of them for the woods. I soon heard the dogs with their frightful baying, and the men hallooing at the top of their voices—"Stop, you d—d nigger, or we will shoot you!" As good fortune ordered it, the woods into which I ran was thick and full of shrubbery, and a large stream passed through it, running along the foot of a hill. I recollected having chased foxes in my earlier days, and also of hunting minks. The foxes some-

times run back and forth, and in circles, to confuse the hound. The minks dive into water. I tried the policy of each, running back and forth across the stream, as often as I dared, and then along in the edge of the stream, to embarrass the dogs. In this way I kept the dogs off, and the men not being so well accustomed to running in the woods as I was, and being also hindered by their guns, I gained upon them in the flight and escaped to the wood, and as I hoped was safe for the present. But I was mistaken. I had been in the wood but a short time before I was surprised by two men who had gone on in pursuit of me. They had no dogs. Being already weary and lame, they had the advantage of me, and might if they had had guns, have disabled and captured me. But I again ran to the woods which were near, and started off in a southerly direction until I came into the thickets, when I turned and ran due west, thinking I should thereby elude them, as they would in all probability continue south. I judged correctly, and it was well for me that I did, for being so weary and lame I could not have continued so long as they did. I ran on as long as I thought it necessary, and then took a moderate pace, cautiously listening to hear if I was still pursued. A short time before sun-set, to my surprise and regret, I saw as the sun shone out, that I was tending to the south. Disappointed and confused, I turned my face again to the north, and traveled until I came into the highway.

CHAPTER III.

After again finding the road, I traveled on during the remainder of the night, only stopping to rest myself occasionally, or to allow some traveler to pass, or to pick a few blackberries and gather a little wheat to satisfy my hunger. In the morning I again sought the woods for safety and rest.

If any one wishes to know what were my feelings during this time, let them imagine themselves a slave, with the strong arm of the law extended over their heads—doomed, if retaken,

to a severe punishment, and almost unendurable torture. Compelled to toil from day to day, subject to the hardships and cruelties of such toil as slaves only know, with none but fellow sufferers to sympathize with him, and they unable to afford relief—with no prospect of a better state, for life—deprived of the blessings of knowledge and the sweets of intellectual pursuit. Seeing all the free white people around him happy in the possession of friends and the blessings of life and himself a crushed, degraded being. Desiring to arise, but unable to do so. Then imagine yourself, on the road, flying for liberty among your enemies, alone, unarmed, trembling at every step with the greatest anxiety and with fear. Sleeping during the day alone in the wilderness, exposed to wild beasts and serpents; hungry, lame, and almost spirit-broken—starting up from a disturbed sleep, with frightful dreams of arrest and torture. Hunted and chased during the day by men of no heart and with ferocious dogs, trained to the pursuit—the faint gleams of freedom now shooting up, and then lost in darkness—hope and despair alternately filling your heart. This was my situation for weeks. But thank God, I can now *look back* upon that volume of trying scenes and feel—*they are past*, and rejoice in the sweet behests of my God-given rights.

In the morning, of the next day, as I was traveling leisurely along, I saw a boy watching me very closely. As I came up within a few rods of the house, he darted into it. I suspected his errand, and instead of going on—turned back, carefully crouching in the shade of the fence until I came to a group of bushes: behind these I ran on until I came into an open field, in an opposite direction from that they had supposed me to be going, little dreaming that I had been watched by others, who were in pursuit of me and had taken ambush in several places. But I was not long in this ignorance—for as I was urging my way through the field to a larger piece of woods, and just upon the point of scaling a fence, a man sprang up like a tiger from the side of a log and struck at me. Quick as I could, I turned and ran a few steps and bounded over the fence.—Just as my

feet struck the ground, a club grazed my shoulder, but did me no harm ; a little way ahead, I saw another man and dog, with a boy and horse. The man had a gun. Now, thought I, are my hopes blasted. I had heard about the Israelites when they fled from the slavery of Egypt. I thought I was like them. Before me and behind me are death. I almost sank down with despair—but rallied again, determined to sell my life and liberty together, or to gain them. And with that strength, which even surprized me, I ran for the bushes—the dog pursuing me in the lead, followed by the two men and boy—the man being on horseback. As the dog came up, I seized a stone, and fortunately hit him in the head, leaving him stiff upon the ground. The man on the horse soon came up and uttering oaths which made my blood chill, almost, commanded me to stop. I did so—but only to draw back my trusty hickory, and by well a directed blow sent him reeling from his unsaddled horse. He soon recovered, however, as the blow only stunned him for a moment, and renewed the pursuit. As he came up the second time, before he reached me he tried to fire upon me, but as fortune ordered it, his gun missed, and left him in a rage. He then rode on, with the weapon raised in his hand, commanding me to stop. I had a round stone in my hand, and when he came near enough,I determined to give him what we used to call a "hard biscuit," and threw the stone,which,from the cry he gave, I knew had hit him somewhere, and caused him to halt until his companion came up with him.

Some may think I did wrong in this, and I am very sure it was very hazardous, for the penalty is severe upon slaves who strike a white man, but I was after a prize for which I was willing to risk my life. And I doubt not, any one who reads this, would have done the same. And if it was right for the revolutionary patriots to fight for liberty, it was right for me, and it is right for any other slave to do the same. And were I now a slave, I would risk life for freedom. "Give me liberty or give me death," would be my deliberate conclusion.

Determined not to be frustrated in their designs, they started again in hot pursuit. As the rider came up, I determined to

try once more the strength of my arm and my hickory, and dealt him a blow in the breast, and just at that moment heard his companion cry out, "ride over him, Hicks;" but the only answer Hicks gave, as a groan told me I had given him a sure blow—was, "I c-a-n-t."

I had by this time, most providentially for me, gained the edge of a wide piece of thickly growing hazle, called "buck pasture." Knowing I could beat them in running in this, I darted into it, and ran on until a little out of hearing of them and turned a short angle a few rods, and crawled into a thick cluster, intending to let them pass. I soon heard them coming, and cursing the "dog."

"Why didn't you *lay* him, Hicks," said his companion.

"I couldn't" replied Hicks, "he came pretty near making an all day job of it for me.

"You ought to have killed him," replied the other.

"Couldn't do it, I tell you—I never saw such a nigger—the very devil couldn't take him alone."

Just then a noise was heard a little to the left of me, probably a wild animal of some kind, and I had the inexpressible joy to hear them start off, exclaiming, "Yonder he goes; now, we will soon have him—Stop you nigger, or we will take your life!" And if they had done so, the law would have exonerated them in it—for it is lawful to shoot a slave if he refuses to return to his master when commanded to do so, by any one, whether his "owner" or not. It is frequently the case, that slaves are shot under those circumstances, and no notice taken of it. And slave hunters are often directed to bring back the slave, who may have escaped, "dead or alive!"

I waited until all was still, and crept out of my retreat and went back in the direction from which I had been pursued, keeping the woods as far as they went, keeping a westerly course, while they went north, or north east—traveling an resting the remainder of that day and night unmolested. I had learned from the imminent perils I had just escaped, the necessity for being more cautious.

Knowing, as I well did, by the scenes I had just experienced, that I was pursued, and that the well trained dogs would be put in requisition, I resolved, to avoid as much as possible, taking the roads. But it was necessary for me to travel a part of the time in them, both on account of the fatigue it gave me to run in the woods and fields, and the difficulty of keeping my course, northward as I knew I must do, to get out of the region of slavery.

I am sometimes asked, how we learn the way to the free States ? My answer is, that the slaves know much more about this matter than many persons are aware. They have means of communication among each other, altogether unknown to their masters, or to the people of the free States—even the route of some who have escaped is familiarly known to the more intelligent ones. There is scarcely one, who does not understand the position of the "north star," although that is about the extent of their knowledge of Astronomy. The reasons why more do not follow it, are want of means and the fear of death if apprehended. Slaves are watched and guarded like caged animals.

CHAPTER IV.

The day following, when near eleven o'clock, I was moving cautiously along, I saw a man on a small hillock in front of his house, apparently watching my movements. I had reason to expect he would pursue me. I had learned to look upon every white man as my foe, and dared not pass near to any one. I saw on my left a large meadow near the banks of the Wabash, in which a large number of cattle were grazing ; and directed my steps toward them, determined if followed to cross the river and climb the rugged banks opposite and hide among its projections. I was not mistaken. As soon as the man saw my movements, he knew I was a fugitive, and ran to his house, a short distance from where he stood and taking his dog

and gun made chase for me. Like a deer, the hound soon came toward me. At once the thought occurred to me, this dog is not, perhaps well trained, I will try to set him upon the cattle, and clapping my hands, I ran and hallowed, at the top of my voice, s't-a-boy! s't-a-boy! My plan took. The dog darted like lightning through the tall grass in chase of the cattle, who ran with their heads erect, snuffi g like wild beasts; the poor disappointed man-hunter calling him off to no effect. I left him to take care of his dog and cattle, while I swam the stream and hid among the ample shelters erected by the hand of nature—where, wearied almost to death, I sat down beside a spring to bathe my bruised and swollen feet and limbs, and to gain strength for my perilous journey. I heard the merry birds singing in the branches over my head, and saw the bounding squirrels as they leaped from tree to tree. "Happy creatures," said I "this is your home. Its ample domain affords you range for wild sports and songs. But, alas! for me, it only gives a brief shelter and rest from the cruel persecution of my brother men! Would to God the ties of nature, were among men as they are among thee. Thou art happy in thy innocent sports, and each seems to find pleasure in contributing to the other's enjoyment. With man, all is self—self—self. The price of his pleasure may be the suffering and death of his equal brother, but he heeds n t the unholy sacrifice! God of these woods and hills—this river and these streams, I cried, protect me, as thou dost these little one's of thy power and care;" and I fell asleep among my reflections and prayers—dreaming of the distant hills and valleys of freedom before me, where I stood erect and feared no danger. But I soon awoke from my sweet visions, by the pains in my shoulder, limbs and the gnawing of hunger. I looked around me, and soon found black berries, sweet and delicious with which I filled my hands and ate, thanking Him, who caused them to grow, where no human being would be likely to come to my annoyance as I plucked them from their yielding stems.

I remained in this place, frequently bathing my limbs, and

taking intervals of sleep, until near the close of the next day, resolved to gain the road, and make my way as fast as I could from the country which appeared to be haunted by my pursuers. After traveling all night, without any other annoyance than to be occasionally started by the barking of a watch dog, I found myself drawing slowly toward the place of my destination.

The next day, I was pursued a short distance by two men, but they appeared to have been out on a pleasure excursion, and after running a short distance, and firing at me, gave up the chase, either because they were too weary to pursue it, or being hopeless in regard to success. Their dogs appeared also tired and refused to obey them. Lame and sore as I was, I was gratified when I saw them abandon me.

CHAPTER V.

The next day, finding myself so often in peril by my attempts to pass along as I had done, I resolved, before I emerged from my brief retreat, that I would try a new expedient. I had frequently seen gentlemen traveling, with a servant either preceding or following them on foot. So I waited until I saw a carriage pass, and got into the road, and followed it, and whenever I met any one I would appear to be all anxiety and inquire "how far ahead master's carriage was." This plan worked admirably, and I was enabled to travel more than half a day with one assumed "master"—always managing to be absent when he stopped, and not far behind him when he traveled. My first trick however, did not last me all day, and I was compelled to get a new "master." I thus went on, changing, until I reached the Ohio River, at a place called Barker's old Ferry, where I crossed into Illinois, in the county of Gallatin, and began to feel secure. After wandering about, in the evening, for some time, I found an old horse trough, which was dry—here I laid down and rested. In the early part of the day I

awoke, and went to a stream near by and washed my limbs and rubbed them until they were relieved of their pain and stiffness, when I again started, growing more and more impatient, the farther I got from the place of my servitude. I almost forgot my pains and deprivations—my perils and narrow escapes, in the joy of my supposed safety. But how little knew I what a day would bring forth. I had scarcely felt the first delightful sensations of my proximity to the non-slaveholding regions, where I hoped to find friends and home, ere I was startled from my pleasing reveries by the sound of a man's voice, ordering me to "stop!" On looking at my side, I saw a man standing in the door of a small hut, I did not obey the voice, but went on at a more rapid walk, receiving for my temerity, a stone, thrown with some force, hitting me in the leg. I then started off on a run, the man after me, crying, "stop him, stop him!" I looked up a short distance ahead, and saw a carriage standing in the road, and concluded the persons who owned it were not in it, no horses were attached to it,—ran on, until a few steps from it, in the act of passing, the door flew open, and two men rushed out and discharged a pistol at me but without effect. I dodged from them and out-ran them until I came to a precipice not far from the road, and threw myself down it far enough to be beyond their reach, the last ball the fellow had in his pistol, whizzing past my head as I escaped. At the bottom of the precipice was a large stream, overhung with bushes, and the men supposed I had gone to the bottom and was out of sight as they came up, although I was then snugly 'sconced beneath their feet under a shelf of the bank. They stood a moment as they came up swearing at my miraculous speed, for so "clumsy looking a fellow," and came to the conclusion, I had "jumped my last jump," that time, and walked off.

After they had been absent, as I thought, long enough, I got out and went on in another course, until I began to fear I was on the wrong track, and called to inquire of a man, whose name I afterwards learned to be Digly, in what place I then was.

He told me, and mistrusting me to be a fugitive, directed me to the house of a Dr. not far distant, whom he said I would find to be a friend. So I did; but, knowing the law to be severe toward those who harbor run-away slaves, he was quite unwilling to have me remain. More than that, he told me I would also be in great danger of apprehension, by remaining with him, as he had much company and all would be curious to know who was in his employ. But, I was so happy to hear one human voice—(the first I had heard in many days) that spoke in words of sympathy, I could not think of leaving him, hoping that in case of any signs of trouble I could escape. This gentleman gave me food and a comfortable bed.

In the morning I took his team and went to work, ploughing. I had not heen at work but a few hours, before I saw several men coming toward me, and soon recognized among them one whom I had seen the day or two previous. He had pursued me on horseback, and the man who directed me to the Doctor had betrayed me. I presume he meant to do so, when he sent me there, and had intended to get the Doctor's feet into the same snare—it being contrary to law to harbor a fugitive slave.

Here I found myself involved in new difficulties and dangers, and O, how bitterly did I regret that I had not gone on. But it was too late. I was surrounded, and entirely defenseless. My trusty hickory that had made a pathway for me through braces of bull dogs and men, was at the house, and I was barefoot and in an open field. The men took me, and after binding my hands and limbs carried me back to a magistrate, where I was examined and being unable to prove my freedom was sent to jail, to be kept for six weeks, and sold according to law to pay my jail fees.

I was put under the care of an officer and one other man, who with a dog, were my guards and escort to prison. The men were very intemperate, and but for the dog whom they set to guard me, I could easily have escaped them. Before going to bed, at a tavern where they stopped for the night, on learning

that I was a "pious nigger," as they called me, they made me sing and pray for them.

The next morning we started again. They drank freely, as they had done the day previously, and to amuse themselves or to torture me, made me run, or rack along, with cords around my knees and my arms fastened behind, laughing and harrassing my feelings as much as possible whenever they met any one.

I found after a while, that the cords were loose and that I could slip them off—so I started on a little faster and faster, gradually gaining upon them until I finally slipped off my cords entirely, and could have escaped, but for the thickness of the swamp and my bare feet. They soon saw that my cords were off and rode on until they overtook me. We then went on, they making me run faster than before as a punishment for having tried to escape.

I was taken to jail and shut up in a dungeon, with several others. One of the number was a man, whiter than most farmer's, and said he was free. He had a wife and children, poor fellow and was almost distracted. But we could not help him, any more than he could help us.

I can scarcely give the reader a fair impression of the sufferings we endured in that cold, damp, filthy cell. No one was there to care for us. Our food was principally potatoes or coarse bread and water, and not enough of that even to keep us from half starving. Our complaints were answered by abuse, and sometimes by the lash.

During my imprisonment, the skin came off my feet and limbs and they were very much swollen and painful, but I could get no water to wash them, or to cool their burning fever. And I sometimes thought I had better have stayed in Kentucky, for I knew not what would be my fate, if I lived to see the day of my sale. Perhaps I should be sent off again to some distant state, and be subject to more terrible treatment than I had ever yet experienced. But all I could do, was to sit down, and meet my fate—for I learned to my sorrow that

"on the side of the oppresser there was power, and there was none to help."

CHAPTER VI.

The day at length came for our sale. I was taken out and placed on the stand.

"How much will you give, gentlemen, for this boy. Acquainted with all kinds of work and a smart active fellow?"

"Six dollars," was bid, by one.

"Will you live with me, if I will buy you, boy:" said a fat faced landlord.

"I think it rather hard," I replied, "to be torn away from my rights and shut up in jail, and then sold for life to pay the jail fees."

"Seven dollars," said the landlord; adding, "I'll risk him."

So the sale went on, and I was finally struck off to the landlord, with whom I was duly installed into the office of Ostler—a service I was quite willing to render, considering the advantages it would give me in acquiring information relating to the position of the country to which I intended on the first opportunity to go, in search of my brother.

I remained with this man nearly a month, and had got a pretty good suit of clothes and picked up a little change; when I made up my mind I had paid my "jail fees," and left him. I determined not to leave my new master, until I had fully paid him, for he treated me as well as if I had been a white man, and but for the fact of my being a slave, I should have been very happy in his employment.

After I left Hopper, the landlord, I traveled all night, passing up through Hillsborough, Carlisle, and other towns to Bloomington, traveling nights only and hiding in the woods during the day, until I had got out of danger. At Bloomington I went to work and remained eleven months in the vicinity of my old Kentucky Master's sons and sons-in-law. Some of

them were disposed to inform against me and have me taken back, but the others being opposed to it from feelings of sympathy prevented it, and I was not disturbed.

After remaining at this place eleven months, during which time I clothed myself well and saved considerable money, I started for Wisconsin, where my brother was living, whom I had not seen for the space of nine years. On my calling at his house, he did not know me, nor could I identify myself by any marks or evidences, about my person. At length, I began to recount some of the scenes of our boy hood, when he at once recognized, and joyfully received me. One reason for the want of recognition, was the fact that, although brought up in the same neighborhood, yet we rarely saw each other, except on holidays or Sundays, when allowed to exchange visits, and being young had not any fixed impressions in regard to each other, save the associations of which I have made mention, relating to days of our boy-hood.

With my brother, I remained nearly one year, earning when I worked one dollar per day. It was a new era indeed in my existence, when I could carry home with me at night, and feel it all my own, more money than I had ever handled while a slave during any single year of my life. I was well clothed—lived well and happy, so far as my own condition was concerned. But I could not sleep, often, when I would turn my thoughts to my countrymen in chains. I would compare my situation with theirs, and often lie and weep bitter tears of sympathy for those I had left behind me. I would have dared and endured any thing to have saved even one.

I have frequently heard pro-slavery men say that the slaves could "not take care of themselves," if they were set free. That they would "starve to death," or become "poor charges," and the like. But I would like to have those who think so, cite a case, where any thing like a fair opportunity has been given, of a self emancipated slave, who has not secured a comfortable subsistence by his own exertions. Indeed I know that many of my white fellow laborers, at the west, whose advantages

were far better than my own, never manage their affairs half so well as I did, and on some occasions, came to me for help. And these same men too, would sometimes repeat the foolish language of their masters—"the niggers can't take care of themselves."

There were many persons in the place where I was laboring, who were friendly to the cause of slaves and did much to encourage the fugitives in their attempts to escape. They had become acquainted with my history, and desired me to relate to the public, something I knew from my own experience and observation about slavery. An opportunity was offered for my complying with this request, at a large meeting held in Prairieville. A gentleman, offered to pay my expenses if I would attend the meeting, and talk. I consented; but when I arose to speak, I was so unlearned and embarrassed that I could with difficulty keep my feet. I had rather have met half a dozen slave-catchers in an open field, if my old "hickory" had been in my hand and my limbs sound and free. But I managed to get out what I wanted to say, and it was received with much pleasure—so much so, that a resolution was passed, inviting me to make the tour of the county and give the people a plain statement of such things as I knew. After remaining in that region two months, however, I learned there was to be a large meeting in the city of Buffalo, and resolved to attend it—which I did, and since that time, with the exception of a short time I spent in Canada, I have been lecturing and talking to the people, selling books and papers in this state, up to the present time, in the hope of adding my mite to the influences, which I hope will eventually result in turning the heart of every man woman and child against that most wicked and unjust of all institutions. And but for the fact that my countrymen are still in bondage, I should be happy indeed in the blessings of liberty. Among which, none are prized more highly than that of learning to read and write. For when I first came into this state even, I could not write, and reading was quite out of the question. I can now read tolerably well, and write so well

as to astonish all who know me, but none more than myself. And it is my intention soon to write a long letter to my old master, showing him the difference between the effect of twenty six years of slavery and four years of freedom—leaving him to judge which is the best for man. Indeed, I know what the honest conviction of every one *now* is. They know the slaves would all be much happier and more useful, if blessed with education—but the difficulties in keeping them in subjection would be greatly augmented. This is the reason why they are kept in ignorance. If every slave knew even the little that I do, they could not be kept in chains twelve months.

I close this narrative, with the following lines from the eloquent Rev. John Pierpont.

"Call out O God, thy legions—
The hosts of love and light!
Even in the blasted regions
That slavery wraps in night,
Some of thine own annointed
Shall catch the welcome call,
And, at the hour appointed,
Do battle for the thrall.

Let press, let pulpit thunder
In all slave-holder's ears,
Till they disgorge the plunder
They've garnered up for years;
Till Mississippi's valley,
Till Carolina's coast,
Round freedom's standard rally
A vast, a *ransomed* host.

ANECDOTES,

RELATING TO SLAVERY—WITH FACTS, SHOWING THE INFLUENCE OF SLAVERY UPON SLAVEHOLDERS ETC.

The first anecdote I will mention, is one which occurred while I was the slave of a preacher. We used to call him a "right down, blower." He would preach and pray with a great deal of correctness and feeling, and often had the people all in tears, but when at home, quarreled, with his wife like Lucifer. I once overheard the following dialogue between them.

Wife.—"You have been to the kitchen, to see Hannah."

Preacher.—"You lie; I have not been there at all."

Wife.—"Well I know you have, you brute—I have a great mind to cut my own throat!"

Preacher.—"O dear, I really wish you would."

Wife.—"Yes, I presume you do, so that you could run to the kitchen, as much as you please to see Hannah. Old man you need not try to thrust me off, for I have got some friends, as well as you."

Preacher.—"O yes, I know—Ben is a particular friend of your's I am aware."

Wife.—"If you mention that again, I will surely report you to the preachers."

Preacher.—"Well, well, we had better both stop I guess, and make up friendships."

Wife.—"No, I won't," and off she goes in a storm."

I used to look in to see how they acted when it came time to pray.

Now, I always used to think, (and more so than ever, since

I got away from slavery) that what made them act so, toward each other, was the habits they were in, of abusing other people. If they had treated the slaves in a friendly manner, they would not have had such bad hearts toward one another.

CRUELTY.

I knew an old slave and his wife, who had become so infirm they could not work. Their master wished to get rid of them, so he put them up to the lowest bidder to be taken care of. The man that got them was a drunkard. He did not care what became of them so, that he got his pay. He put them into a small hut, and fed them the refuse of his table where he fed his dogs. One night the old man fell into the fire in a fit and died, his wife being unable to get him out. And the only remarks made about it were—"Well, poor old man, he is out of trouble and suffering."

I once saw, while at work on the turnpike near the springs, a laboring man taken off the road and flogged and paddled until his body was beat to a pumice. He could not work for several days. But as soon as he could move again, he was driven to work, with as little mercy as if he had been a galled horse. And if one of us said a word in his behalf we were knocked down. O it used to make my heart bleed, and I could scarcely keep my hands off the overseers. I could mention a great many cases but I forbear.

PREJUDICE AGAINST COLOR.

I have heard a great many people at the north talk against having the colored people associate with whites. And I am willing all should exercise their taste in such matters, but the only objection I often find, is pride and love of oppression. I have often been to dances got up by the colored folks at the

South—the slaves, and when we were all enjoying our amusement, some of the white gentlemen would come in and crowd us off the floor and make the girls dance with them—and if we showed the least resistence of such aggressions upon our rights, we were knocked down, and if we laid a hand upon the white *gentlemen*, the law punished *us* severely.

Now if there is so much "natural repugnance" to color, why do these young men take so much pleasure in crowding into their society, in such unmanly ways, and trampling on all laws of honor and decency? And why are there so many children at the south almost white? And why do the gentry all prefer colored servants and waiters? I think it is something else, altogether, than prejudice against color. It is hatred of csste. They degrade us, and hate to see us trying to rise to intelligence, honor and happiness.

I have often been traveling, when during the night, while darkness gave us all one color, my fellow passengers, would remain as quiet in the coach with me, as if I were a white millionaire, but as soon as day-light came, they were violently attacked with colorphobia, and talked loudly of throwing me out, although I had paid my fare. I always felt proud, however, of the consciousness that it was not any thing that reason and judgment condemned in me—for when *these* only acted, I was treated like a human being. But when pride and prejudice speak, it is in language of haughtiness. If men were all blind, the black man would be as good as the white man—for their *mind* and *heart* would be put in the scale and not the *color of the skin.*

HOW THEY DECEIVE EACH OTHER.

Slaveholders often practice deception on each other, and the slaves at the same time. I once knew a case. A man wanted to sell his slave, but the purchaser was afraid the "boy" would not stay with him. His master then agreed to pay the slave twenty dollars if he would tell the man who talked of

buying him, that he was willing to go and would stay with him. The slave agreed to it—but as soon as the bargain was closed, the man refused to pay the twenty dollars and the "boy" refused to go. A quarrel ensued, and came near resulting in blows. The slave was finally bound and taken off—but ran away in less than a month.

I knew a case of a drunken slaveholder, who, in one of his "sprees," traded off a good horse for a blind one. He came home—and in the morning, when he found out how he had been cheated, he offered his slave "Ned" twenty dollars if he would trade him off, to advantage, or sell him for a given sum.

Very few persons will ever purchase of a slave, except when they think they can make a great bargain and escape, it being contrary to law. But on this occasion, the slave knew too much for the white jockey. He rode the horse off to a place of public gathering, and managed to exhibit the animal, which was a beautiful one, to the best advantage. At length, when he appeared to be riding off, a jockey came up and inquired whose horse he had. Upon being told it was his master's, and that he had permission to sell it, the jockey asked the price.

"One hundred dollars," was the answer.

"Why does your master wish to sell him!"

"Oh, he has some faults."

"Oh, he throws his head down, to drink, so quick it jerks the bridle from Massa's hands,"—or, perhaps, a number of trifling objections were given. The man thinking the horse worth $150 offered $93. It was taken, and Ned started for home, well knowing that if pursued, he could silence the complaints of the purchaser by reference to the law in regard to "trading with slaves without license."

EXPEDIENTS TO GET LUXURIES.

It is so often the case that slaves do not enjoy the good and wholesome food necessary to make them happy, that they often resort to every possible expedient to obtain it. A few cases I will mention. At one time we had been kept for a long time on corn and potatoes with a little salt, and our "mouths watered," for the "flesh pots," of our master, as did the Israelites after a long diet on manna. How to get it, was the question. We finally hit and agreed upon a plan which succeeded. It was at the time when opossums, were plenty and fat. We asked and obtained permission to go out opossum hunting, and killed several. On our return we killed two good fat pigs, skinned them and buried the skins and entrails. Then skinned our opossum's and buried the bodies, while we put the pigs nicely dressed and seasoned into kettles and boiled them. While the odor was rising to sharpen our appetites, master came in, and inquired what we had in our kettle. "A good fat opossum," was the reply, and the skin was presented in proof of our statements. With this reply, master seemed satisfied and walked away, remarking, as he went—"well, you can live like kings if you chose now—opossums are fat and nice and make a good dish for you." But didn't we laugh when he was gone—especially, while eating the *pig* for *opossum!*

When a turkey or fowls were wanted—we used to catch them—dress them and eat them up in the night taking care to leave the feathers so scattered around as to indicate the havoc of Foxes, and were always ready to follow our master's wishes in hunting for the *Foxes* after a night of their depredations.

When potatoes were scarce, and we wanted a mess, it was very easy to dig a roast there, and then leave a rail out, or a bar down to give the appearance of their having been taken by the hogs. Frequently the hogs were driven into the field previously to informing our master that they were in the potatoe field.

Various expedients of this kind were resorted to; but not always successful. And some may think it was very wrong.

Perhaps it was; but we were often *very hungry* too, and could see no reason why, since we were compelled to work *without wages*, we should not eat the fruits thereof. Especially, since pious master's forgot the Command, "thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox, that treadeth out the corn." I doubt whether many of our own northern laborers would deem it a very great crime to eat a pig, or even an ox, that might belong to one who was compelling him to labor year after year *without pay*. At any rate, it could not be expected that poor, uneducated, "ignorant" slaves should know any better than to yield to the "first law of nature," self protection, and occasionally infringe the more *refined* rules of civilized and Christianized Society.

MORALITY OF SLAVES.

Are these slaves, with notions so limited and confused, with whom the strongest argument is the bloody lash, susceptible of morals? There must be some ideas of order to understand goodness, to feel the charm of virtue; there must be a will of one's own, and that will must be exercised to contradiction before it can courageously battle with vice. The slave then, in his destitution of light, and his prostration of will cannot have a character for morality. Good and evil to him, are what he is commanded, and what he is forbidden; his will is only that of other people, and his whole energy tends to destroy in him his own self, the conservative principle of every being, for the sake of putting in its place the capricious *self* of somebody else. Ask a slave if he can get you such and such a thing, if he can be free to perform for you such a task, he judges from these questions what you desire, and not having the strength to say *no*, which would perhaps displease you, he answers affirmatively; and the more you seem to desire what you ask, the more he adds to his promise. I have remaked this, whenever I have addressed them, whether I had really need, or wished only to try them; but no sooner have they left you, than they give

themselves no further trouble about their promises, they act as if they had forgotten them, and the next time they see you, it is with the same assurance as before ; shame for a lie is unknown to them. A lie is so often useful to them, and the truth so often disastrous, and their aptness at a lie is such, that they take in sustaining it, an air of assurance and tranquility which imposes upon strangers ; often the terrible preparation for punishment, and the redoubled blows of the whip, cannot extort from them the truth. Of course we no more expect to find in them that species of fidelity which respects the property of others ; can those who have no property themselves, and know not what it is to have it, find any thing good in a virtue which is never otherwise than harmful to them ?

SONGS OF FREEDOM.

For the convenience of those who purchase this book, I have inserted a few songs, which appear to be appropriate.

THE LIBERTY RAIL-ROAD.

"GET OFF THE TRACK!"

AIR—"OLD DAN TUCKER."

Ho! the car Emancipation
Rides majestic thro' the nation,
Bearing on its train the story,
LIBERTY! a nation's glory.
Roll it along, thro' the nation,
Freedom's car, Emancipation.

First of all the train, and greater,
Speeds the dauntless LIBERATOR.
Onward cheered amid hosannas,
And the waving of free banners.
Roll it along! spread your banners,
While the people shout hosannas.

Men of various predilections,
Frightened, run in all directions;
Merchants, editors, physicians,
Lawyers, priests and politicians.
Get out of the way! every station!
Clear the track of 'mancipation!

Let the ministers and churches
Leave behind sectarian lurches;
Jump on board the Car of Freedom,

Ere it be too late to need them.
Sound the alarm! pulpit's thunder!
Ere too late you see your blunder!

Politicians gazed, astounded,
When, at first, our bell resounded:
FREIGHT-TRAINS are coming, tell these foxes,
With our VOTES and BALLOT-BOXES.
Jump for your lives! politicians,
From your dangerous, false positions.

Railroads to Emancipation,
Cannot rest on CLAY foundation;
And the tracks of POLK & DALLAS,
Are but rail-roads to the gallows!
Pull up the rails! Emancipation
Cannot rest on such foundation.

All true friends of Emancipation,
Haste to Freedom's rail-road station;
Quick into the cars get seated,
All is ready and completed.
Put on the steam! all are crying,
And the LIBERTY flags are flying.

Now again the bell is tolling,
Soon you'll see the car-wheels rolling;
Hinder not their destination,
Chartered for Emancipation.
Wood up the fire! keeping it flashing,
While the train goes onward dashing.

Hear the mighty car-wheels humming!
Now look out! the engine's coming!
Church and statesman hear the thunder!
Clear the track or you'll fall under.
Get off the track all are singing,
While the Liberty Bell is ringing

On triumph see them bearing,
Through sectarian rubbish tearing;
The bell and whistle and the steaming,

Startle thousands from their dreaming.
Look out for the cars while the bell rings,
Ere the sound your funeral knell rings.

See the people run to meet us ;
At the depot thousands greet us ;
All take seats with exultation,
In the car Emancipation.
Huzza ! Huzza !! Emancipation
Soon will bless our happy nation,
Huzza ! Huzza !! Huzza !!!

FUGITIVE'S TRIUMPH.

A PORODY, BY J. N. T. T.

Go, go, thou that enslaved me
Now, now thy power is o'er—
'Though thou oft hast bereft me
No—no—oh—no,
I'm not a slave any more.

Thou, thou, broughtest me ever—
Deep, deep, sorrow and pain,
But I've left thee, forever
Nor will I serve thee again—
No—no—oh—no,
I will not serve thee again.

Tyrant ! thou hast bereft me,
Home, friends, pleasures so sweet,
But now forever, I've left thee,
Thou and I never shall meet—
No—no—oh—no,
Thou and I never shall meet.

Joys, joys, bright as the morning—
Now, now, on me will pour—
Hope, hope, sweetly is drawing—
I'm not a slave any more—
No—no—oh—no,
I'm not a slave any more.

SLAVE'S LAMENT.

A PARODY, BY G. W. CLARK.

AIR—"OLD DR. FLEURY."

I am monarch of nought I survey,
My wrongs there are none to dispute,
My master conveys me away,
His whims or caprices to suit.
O, slavery, where are thy charms
That Patriarchs have seen in thy face
I dwelt in the midst of alarms;
And serve in a horrible place.

Religion! what treasures untold
Reside in that heavenly word,
More precious than silver or gold
Or all that this earth can afford,
But I am excluded the light
That leads to this heavenly grace;
The bible is closed to my sight,
His beauties I never can see.

The wood fowl has gone to her nest,
The beast has lain down in his lair;
To me there's no season of rest,
Though I to my quarter's repair.
If mercy, O, Lord is in store,
For those who in slavery pine;
Grant me, when life's troubles are o'e
A place in thy kingdom divine.